



# Iowa Department of Education

Championing excellence for all Iowa students through leadership and service

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## Influenza & Iowa Schools

The Iowa Department of Education ( [DE](#) ) and the Iowa Department of Public Health ( [IDPH](#) ) are working together to provide information to Iowa K -12 schools and community colleges to assist in their influenza season planning.

### Planning & Preparation Resources

Planning and prevention resources are available on the IDPH website. Information for K-12 schools and community colleges includes guidance and recommendations from both the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ( [CDC](#) ) and the IDPH in partnership with the DE.

- [K-12 Schools](#)
- [Child Care and Early Childhood Programs](#)
- [Higher Education/Community Colleges](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education Continuity of Learning](#)
- [H1N1 Related School Dismissals Waiver Process for School Meal Programs](#)
  - [Informational Training](#)

### School Closures

Current recommendation of the CDC is:

*"The decision to dismiss students should be made locally and should balance the goal of reducing the number of people who become seriously ill or die from influenza with the goal of minimizing social disruption and safety risks to children sometimes associated with school dismissal. Based on the experience and knowledge gained in jurisdictions that had large outbreaks in spring 2009, the potential benefits of preemptively dismissing students from school are often outweighed by negative consequences, including students being left home alone, health workers missing shifts when they must stay home with their children, students missing meals, and interruption of students' education. Still, although the situation in fall 2009 is unpredictable, more communities may be affected, reflecting wider transmission."*

### Absentee Reporting

Schools are asked to report absenteeism when 10 percent or more of the total enrollment is absent on any given day. Reports can be made by calling the IDPH Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology at 800-362-2735 or by faxing the form (available at [http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iowa\\_school\\_absenteeism.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iowa_school_absenteeism.pdf)) to 515-281-5698.

The Iowa Influenza Surveillance Network (IISN) is recruiting schools to participate in the surveillance program. Additional information is available at: [http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iuflu\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/iuflu_brochure.pdf).

The CDC has developed an online novel influenza A (H1N1)-related school dismissal reporting system. Schools are requested to designate one person to report dismissals. For a description of this online system visit: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/schools.asp>

### Additional Information

IDPH has also developed recommendations for Child Care Businesses in partnership with the Iowa Department of Human Services. These resources can be accessed at: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/schools.asp>

In addition, IDPH has developed recommendations Iowa businesses in partnership with the Safeguard Iowa Partnership. This guidance is available at: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/schools.asp>

### Influenza Updates

Please continually check for the influenza-like illnesses (ILI) updates at CDC accessible at: <http://www.cdc.gov>. The CDC is a reliable, current information source and you may sign up for emails alerting you of updates.

The DE and the IDPH strongly encourage K-12 schools and community colleges to collaborate with local public health departments on influenza planning activities. For questions about potential novel influenza A (H1N1) vaccine distribution in your community, please contact your local public health department <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/h1n1/vaccine.asp>

Contact IDPH with comments and questions at 1-800-362-2736.

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